



# PENINSULA FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.

Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia

## NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER 2014

### **Woods Reserve 6<sup>th</sup> October**

Five members gathered at Woods Reserve on an overcast but fine and mild and still day, starting from the Balnarring Rd entrance beside the Scout camp. As usual the Bell Miners dominated the first part of the walk through the gully, while the bird numbers thin out as you climb the hill. Both Golden and Rufous Whistlers could be heard, and eventually seen, together with various honeyeaters, pardalotes and cuckoos.

The dam held only a single Wood Duck, but a Pallid Cuckoo was calling loudly in a tree above it. Both Eastern and Crimson Rosellas are commonly seen here, as are the usual bush birds including Fairy-wrens, Eastern Yellow Robin, White-browed Scrubwren and Grey Shrike-thrush. Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes have returned for the summer.

On a branch of a eucalypt hanging over the track a pair of Striated Thornbills was busy coming and going around their globular side-entrance nest, while Red-browed Finches seemed to be nesting in the heart of a clump of mistletoe. Another clump of mistletoe contained the more expected Mistletoebird. Our total of 40 birds for the day was considered quite satisfactory.

In addition to the birds we noted some plants in flower – Woods Reserve is one place to see the Austral Indigo, *Indigofera australis*. Another member of the pea family in evidence was the Hop-leaf Bitter-pea, *Daviesia latifolia*.

We were also pleased to see the club emblem, the Rabbits-ears orchid *Thelymitra antennifera*, in flower. - **Lee Denis**



Pallid Cuckoo Photo: Yvonne Incigneri

### **Bird List For Woods Reserve 6 October 2014**

Australian Wood Duck	Eastern Rosella	Striated Thornbill	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie
Australian Pelican	Pallid Cuckoo	Red Wattlebird	Eastern Yellow Robin	Little Raven
Australian White Ibis	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Little Wattlebird	Golden Whistler	Red-browed Finch
Straw-necked Ibis	Laughing Kookaburra	Bell Miner	Rufous Whistler	Mistletoebird
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Superb Fairy-wren	Noisy Miner	Grey Shrike-thrush	Welcome Swallow
Galah	Spotted Pardalote	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Fantail	Common Blackbird
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-browed Scrubwren	White-eared Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	Common Starling
Crimson Rosella	Brown Thornbill	White-plumed Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird	Common Myna

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Russell Mawson  
Native Orchids of Victoria  
8<sup>th</sup> October**

Russell is a committee member of the Australian Native Orchid Society. He started his talk with the surprising statistic that 10% of the world's flora are orchids – we think of them as rare and exotic, not numerous.

Australia has 1300 species of orchid, Victoria 362 species, and the Mornington Peninsula and Westernport region has 130 species, which Russell concentrated on for this talk with a selection from each genus.

He started with *Caladenia robinsonii*, the Frankston spider orchid. The original Frankston site they grew on has been built over, but a population at Rosebud survives with much care from volunteers, and some have been propagated and planted at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens as insurance. He also showed us *C. tentaculata*, *C. parva*, *C. clavigera* and *C. latifolia*, pointing out the differences between them.



*Caladenia robinsonii*. Photo: Russell Mawson

For *Chiloglottis reflexa* and *C. trilabia*, the autumn wasp and tall wasp respectively, the only difference between them is a detail of the labellum. They were previously one species, but orchids are constantly being revised, split and renamed, a source of much frustration for casual observers like us, and a challenge for serious observers like Russell.

The purple donkey orchid, *Diuris punctata*, is a notable local one. There is a large population at Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve, next to McClelland Drive, which were translocated from the railway line across the road, and are doing well. Another population, on the Mornington Railway line between Wooralla Drive and Oakbank Rd, although monitored and weeded by volunteers, are not doing well – swamp rats are eating the tubers. Russell also showed us *D. orientis*, *D. sulphurea* and *D. behrii*.

Another notable local is *Pterostylis cucullata*, the leafy greenhood, found at Cape Schanck and Tootgarook, and classed as vulnerable Victoria wide. It is pollinated by a fungus gnat, and will not survive cultivation and translocation. The tall greenhood, previously *P. longifolia*, has now been split into *P. chlorogramma* and *P. melagramma*. Other local Greenhoods are the most commonly seen *P. nutans* (nodding), and also *P. curta*, *P. concinna*, *P. sanguinea*, *P. pedunculata*, *P. alpina* and *P. grandiflora*.

Red beaks, *Pyrorchis nigricans*, rarely flower except after fires, but the leaves are widely seen. David Archer remarked that he had seen swathes of them in flower

recently at the Grampians after bushfires last summer. The rosy hyacinth, *Dipodium roseum*, is a leafless semi-saprophyte, relying on mycorrhizal fungus and an unknown plant.

The *Prasophyllums*, leek orchids, have 3 local species, 2 of which are vulnerable. The flowers are upside down, with the labellum pointing up.

The sun orchids, *Thelymitra*, are a challenge too – they tend to be promiscuous and hybridize easily, making identification uncertain, and for example, spotted sun orchids do not always have spots.

The pollination of orchids by insects, mainly bees and wasps, is another fascinating subject, which Rudie Kuiter, local orchid expert, has written a book on, *Orchid Pollinators of Victoria*, which is recommended by Russell. We saw many other orchids, too numerous to list, all beautifully photographed by Russell. - Judy Smart



*Diuris punctata*. Photo: Russell Mawson

## Buttongrass Walk, Bunyip State Park

11<sup>th</sup> October

Nine of us enjoyed a lovely Spring day at Bunyip State Park. After meeting at Mortimer Picnic Ground we started with the Buttongrass Nature Walk.

Buttongrass (*Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus*) is actually a sedge, not a grass, with distinctive button-like flower heads.

The walk notes provided by the Friends of Bunyip State Park added to our enjoyment with the information provided. (We noted that Leon Costermans is credited on the brochure for line illustrations and map).

We were able to identify the 4 types of Hakea growing there, 4 types of Acacia, and the rare Swamp Bush-pea (*Pultenea weindorferi*). This was not so rare on Saturday - it was everywhere, as a result of a fire a few years ago. The plant recruits in vast numbers after fire, and becomes gradually less common as other plant species crowd it out.



Buttongrass. Photo: Lee Denis



*Pultenea weindorferi*. Photo: Lee Denis

Another intriguing plant was the primitive fern-like Bushy

Clubmoss (*Lycopodium deuterodensum*), a plant descended from trees that dominated the forests 300 million years ago.



*Lycopodium deuterodensum*. Photo: Lee Denis

The Southern Emu-wren was nowhere to be seen, but we did see a young Lowland Copperhead snake.

After lunch at Mortimer Picnic Ground we walked around the track there, and were struck by how closely the bush resembled Greens Bush. One major difference was the Hairpin Banksia, (*Banksia spinulosa*) which does not grow on the Mornington Peninsula. Other interesting plants to us were *Daviesia leptophylla*, the narrow leafed Daviesia, and an array of *Dillwynias*, not all of which we could identify.

We were surprised not to see any orchids on the Buttongrass walk, but there were plenty of Common Bird Orchids on the Mortimer walk. The bird list isn't long, but it was a great day for flora. - Judy Smart

\*\*\*\*\*

## Crib Point

26<sup>th</sup> October

At Russell Mawson's suggestion we were privileged to tag along with the Australian Native Orchid Society (ANOS) excursion to Crib Point. We all met at Crib Point Primary School in Milne St, to look at the blocks either side of the school. Our leader, Andrew Dilley, had hopes that the sun

orchids would all be open and putting on a show.

Unfortunately the weather was overcast although warm, and the sun orchids uncooperative. They were there in numbers, but closed up. We did see *Caladenia pusilla* (Tiny

Fingers), *Caladenia tentaculata* (Mantis Orchid) and the last of the *Prasophyllum spicatum* (Dense Leek Orchid), plus *Acianthus pusillus* (Small Mosquito Orchids, finished) and on the other block masses of *Hyperanthus suavolens* (Brown Beaks) plus *Microtis* sp. (Onion Orchids). Looking up for a change, we saw a tawny frogmouth.



*Caladenia tentaculata*. Photo: Lee Denis



*Caladenia pusilla*. Photo: Yvonne Incigneri

We had lunch at Woolleys Beach, and walked along the track to see *Diuris sulphurea* (Tiger Orchid), a spectacular

sight, plus *Microtis unifolia* (Onion Orchid). We also saw an echidna, and a glimpse of a swamp rat.

Then it was around the corner to Lorimer St, hoping that the sun orchids would open up. A few did, but not many. *Thelymitra aristata*, *T. ixiooides* and *T. flexuosa* were identifiable, but many others were not. The highlight was a *Calochilus campestris* (Copper Beard Orchid), plus lots of *Cryptostylis subulata* (Tall Tongue Orchid) in bud.



*Calochilus campestris*. Photo: Lee Denis

The flowers, insects and day flying moths were plentiful. The Lorimer St blocks would be under threat if the expansion of the Port of Hastings goes ahead, which is of great concern to us all. - **Judy Smart**

#### Crib Point Flora list 26 October 2014 – in flower, and caught my eye, not comprehensive, old names

<i>Amperea xiphoclada</i> – broom spurge	<i>Hibbertia riparia</i> – erect guinea flower
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i> – chocolate lily	<i>Isopogon ceratophyllum</i> – horny cone-bush
<i>Billardiera scandens</i> – apple berry	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i> – running postman
<i>Bossiaea prostrata</i> – creeping bossiaeae	<i>Leptospermum continentale</i> – prickly tea tree
<i>Brunonia australis</i> – blue pincushion -in bud only	<i>Patersonia occidentalis</i> – flag lily
<i>Burchardia umbellata</i> – milk maids	<i>Pimelea humilis</i> – dwarf rice flower
<i>Caesia parviflora</i> – white lily	<i>Pimelea octophylla</i> – woolly rice flower
<i>Comesperma calymega</i> – blue spike milk wort	<i>Platylobium obtusangulum</i> – common flat pea
<i>Comesperma volubile</i> - love creeper	<i>Sphaerolobium vimineum</i> – leafless globe pea

<i>Coronodium- (Helichrysum) scorpioides</i> – Sunray	<i>Stylium graminifolium</i> – trigger plant
<i>Dianella revoluta</i> – black-anther flax-lily	<i>Themeda triandra</i> – kangaroo grass
<i>Dillwynia sericea</i> – showy parrot pea	<i>Thysanotus tuberosus</i> – twining fringe lily
<i>Epacris impressa</i> – common heath	<i>Tricoryne elatior</i> – yellow star
<i>Goodenia geniculata</i> – bent goodenia	<i>Wahlenbergia</i> sp – bluebell
<i>Hakea ulicina</i> – furze hakea	<i>Xanthorrhoea minor</i> ssp <i>lutea</i> - dwarf grass tree

\*\*\*\*\*

### Rolfes Reserve/Warrengine 3<sup>rd</sup> November

Our scheduled birding outing was to Rolfes Reserve in Tyabb, but on arrival we found that the park was closed for fox control. We did some bird spotting from the road – coming up with 24 species – before deciding to head to Warrengine Reserve near Hasting.

Starting from the Hendersons Road end we immediately heard a Golden Whistler and Bell Miners, while along the track we had close encounters with a Grey Shrike-thrush and a Shining Bronze-cuckoo. Honeyeaters included Wattlebirds, Yellow-faced and New Holland Honeyeaters, and Eastern Spinebill.

On the wetland in the middle were a few ducks, and Purple Swamphens with young, while nearby we saw a Rufous Whistler. Red-browed Finches and White-browed Scrubwrens crossed the track. Our bird total for Warrengine was 38. - Lee Denis



Shining Bronze-Cuckoo. Photo: Lee Denis

Bird List For Rolfes Reserve 3 November 2014	
Pacific Black Duck	Laughing Kookaburra
Australian Pelican	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
White-faced Heron	Noisy Miner
Australian White Ibis	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Straw-necked Ibis	Magpie-Lark
Swamp Harrier	Grey Fantail
Purple Swamphen	Grey Butcherbird
Eurasian Coot	Australian Magpie
Crested Pigeon	House Sparrow
Galah	Little Grassbird
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Common Starling
Eastern Rosella	Common Myna

Bird List For Warrengine 3 November 2014		
Australian Wood Duck	Laughing Kookaburra	Rufous Whistler
Pacific Black Duck	Superb Fairy-wren	Grey Shrike-thrush
Chestnut Teal	White-browed Scrubwren	Magpie-Lark
Australian Pelican	Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail
White-faced Heron	Red Wattlebird	Grey Butcherbird
Purple Swamphen	Little Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Silver Gull	Bell Miner	Grey Currawong
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Noisy Miner	Little Raven
Common Bronzewing	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Rainbow Lorikeet	New Holland Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Crimson Rosella	Eastern Spinebill	Silvereye
Eastern Rosella	Eastern Yellow Robin	Common Myna
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Golden Whistler	

\*\*\*\*\*

**Jack Krohn**  
**Biosphere & Biodiversity Around Western Port**  
**November 12**

Jack was an inaugural board member of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation, (known as the Biosphere Foundation for short), through his work at the Victorian Government Environment Department. He served on the board for 10 years, from its establishment in 2002, and on the night of our meeting had attended its AGM before speaking to us.

What is the Biosphere? It is not an easy concept to explain, and its work is not well known. Biospheres are a UNESCO initiative, starting internationally in the 1980s, with the aim of fostering conservation and sustainable development of special areas such as Western Port. Mornington Peninsula Shire and a working group drove this area's nomination.

Each Biosphere has three zones: a core conservation zone – in ours French Island and the Mornington Peninsula National Park; a buffer zone around the core areas where compatible activities occur; and a transition or mixed use zone, where the aim is to promote sustainable activities. Its area of 2100 square kilometres covers five local governments which are members and fund it – City of Frankston, Mornington Peninsula Shire, City of Casey, Cardinia Shire and Bass Coast Shire. The aim is to promote sustainability through research, education, community engagement, partnerships and on-ground conservation efforts.

The current project is Growing Connections, which aims to improve habitat corridors by vegetation mapping and restoration, plus predator control, with particular focus on the Southern Brown Bandicoot. Another focus is Ramsar wetlands and the Western Port water catchment.

Some other Australian Biospheres are Wilsons Promontory, Hattah-Kulkyne and Croajingolong National Parks, Fitzgerald in southern WA, Uluru, and Riverland in SA,

which was known as Bookmark, and is a mixed use area like Western Port.

Internationally there are 500 around the world, and Jack visited three in Europe. The first was Entlebuch in an impoverished corner of Switzerland, with a population of 20,000, and the aim of promoting economic development with conservation. The second was Wienerwald in Austria, with a population of 750,000, and core areas of forest, promoting sustainable recreation and agriculture. The third was Rhon in Germany, near Frankfurt, which incorporates parts of the old East and West Germany, with projects such as black grouse population rebuilding, and removing pine forest, because of its effect on water catchment, and replanting with deciduous trees.

Jack was organiser of the inaugural Bird Search, started in October 2012 after Pat McWhirter of Harewood homestead near Tooradin discovered a bird list compiled by 13 year old Harewood Lyall in 1912, with 42 birds listed. The aim was to see how many of the birds listed were still there 100 years later, with the added complication of interpreting names such as Harewood's "White Shouldered Caterpillar Eater", now known as White winged Triller. 46 birds were found at Harewood in 2012, and 173 altogether by teams at other Biosphere locations. In 2014 Bird Search expanded to Life Search, with teams counting at Wonthaggi Heathlands, Mt Cannibal in Bunyip, Langwarrin FFR, Devilbend and the mouth of the Powlett River, one location for each municipality. The aim is to build community participation in this event in the future.

The Biosphere Foundation is now changing from a representative board to a skills based board, and Rob Gell has handed over the Chair to Duncan Malcolm. I recommend the Biosphere website – [www.biosphere.org.au](http://www.biosphere.org.au)  
**Judy Smart**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Cheetham Wetlands & Westgate Park**  
**22 November**

We don't often venture to the other side of the Bay, so a visit to Cheetham Wetlands and Point Cook Coastal Park was a welcome addition to the schedule. Thanks to our Secretary Judy arranging with Ranger in charge Bernie we were able to have a fairly comprehensive tour of the site, with the additional benefit of some historical background from Bernie, together with some information about management and future plans.

Cheetham Wetlands was once the site of the Cheetham Saltworks, where sea water was pumped in to shallow evaporation ponds for the extraction of salt. Since the closure of the saltworks the area has been declared a Park and since 1996 has been managed as a bird habitat, being an important feeding ground for migratory waders as well

as nomadic and resident shorebirds. It covers an area of 420 hectares, and is Ramsar listed.

The vegetation is low salt marsh, so there is little presence of bush birds. Management has included removal of weed species such as African Boxthorn, Chilean Needle Grass and Serrated Tussock. Two highly significant species that have been recorded include the Orange-bellied Parrot and the Yellowish Sedge-skipper (butterfly).

Seven members made the trip from Frankston on a day that was supposed to be hot, started out cool but warmed up later. Moving into the wetland we quickly were able to see multitudes of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Red-necked Avocet and Black-winged Stilt. There were relatively few ducks,

only Grey and Chestnut Teal and Black Ducks being seen. Four of the five Cormorant species were seen, and both Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbill roosting together on one of the pipelines used for regulating water levels in the ponds. Other waders included Red-necked Stint, Common Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit and Curlew Sandpiper.



*View across the Bay to the City. Photo: Lee Denis*

Black-fronted Dotterel and Red-capped Plover were seen on the waters' edges, Banded Stilt kept mostly the company of the Avocets, while Swans and Coots were numerous. Whiskered Terns swooped endlessly over the water, while Golden-headed Cisticola and White-fronted Chats were also numerous.

After a couple of hours we parted from Bernie, with many thanks, and stopped for lunch in front of the Pt Cook homestead. Here we added most of the bush birds to the list, including Fairy-wren, Goldfinch, and Nankeen Kestrel. There were also the inevitable introduced species, and a

lone Gannet over the Bay. Our total bird count for the Pt Cook area came to 53.



*Black-winged and Banded Stilts with Red-necked Avocet  
Photo: Lee Denis*

After visiting Spectacle Lake, and finding it dry, we decided to head for home via Westgate Park. Many of us have often looked down on this park from Westgate Bridge and made a mental note to visit – this was the day.

We found extensive plantings, wide expanses of water and a number of birds new for the day. Bush birds included a couple of honeyeaters, Welcome Swallow and Superb Fairy-wren, while on the water White-necked Heron, Hardhead, Hoary-headed Grebe and Pelican were species we had not seen at Cheetham. We also got a sight of a Clamorous Reed-warbler on our walk around the central lake.

An enjoyable day visiting, for many of us, two new locations relatively close to home. - Lee Denis

Bird List For Cheetham Wetlands and Point Cook 22 November 2014				
Black Swan	Intermediate Egret	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Crested Tern	Australian Magpie
Pacific Black Duck	Royal Spoonbill	Curlew Sandpiper	Whiskered Tern	Little Raven
Grey Teal	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Black-winged Stilt	Spotted Turtle-Dove	House Sparrow
Chestnut Teal	Black-shouldered Kite	Banded Stilt	Crested Pigeon	European Goldfinch
Australasian Gannet	Swamp Harrier	Red-necked Avocet	Sacred Kingfisher	Welcome Swallow
Little Pied Cormorant	Nankeen Kestrel	Pacific Golden Plover	Superb Fairy-wren	Golden-headed Cisticola
Pied Cormorant	Dusky Moorhen	Red-capped Plover	Red Wattlebird	Common Starling
Little Black Cormorant	Eurasian Coot	Black-fronted Dotterel	White-fronted Chat	Common Myna
Great Cormorant	Bar-tailed Godwit	Red-kneed Dotterel	Magpie-Lark	
White-faced Heron	Common Greenshank	Masked Lapwing	Grey Fantail	
Great Egret	Red-necked Stint	Silver Gull	Willie Wagtail	

**Bird List For Westgate Park 22 November 2014**

Black Swan	Little Pied Cormorant	Purple Swamphen	Superb Fairy-wren	Clamorous Reed-Warbler
Grey Teal	Little Black Cormorant	Dusky Moorhen	White-plumed Honeyeater	Common Blackbird
Chestnut Teal	Australian Pelican	Eurasian Coot	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Myna
Hardhead	White-necked Heron	Black-winged Stilt	Magpie-Lark	
Hoary-headed Grebe	Great Egret	Silver Gull	Welcome Swallow	

\*\*\*\*\*

## Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve

### 1 December

Our visit to Langwarrin in December is usually a mixture of birdwatching and orchid watching, and this year was no different, although for once the birds outshone the orchids. The weather looked threatening, but only a few brief showers eventuated when five members met at the Warrandyte Rd entrance. First spotting was of Horned and Tongue Orchids (*Orthoceras strictum* and *Cryptostylus* sp) in the Warrandyte Break near the SEC Break. Onion Orchids (*Microtis* sp) were plentiful. A Common Bronzewing calling from the woodland started the bird count, together with a Fan-tailed Cuckoo. Along the SEC Break and Reservoir Track we found the usual bush birds including Rainbow Lorikeet, various honeyeaters, Golden and Rufous Whistler, Fairy-wrens and Spotted Pardalotes. A Pied Currawong flew across calling its distinctive call – this bird seems to have taken up residence lately.

Turning into the Owen Dawson Walk we heard Flycatchers calling, and after some time were able to identify male and female Satin Flycatcher, which spent some time watching us as we watched them. These birds – perhaps the same pair – have visited for the past few summers. Also along this Walk were many Hyacinth Orchids (*Dipodium roseum*) not yet flowering, and amongst the numerous Common Bird Orchid (*Chiloglottis valida*) leaves a few still in flower were to be found.

On the way back to Warrandyte Road for lunch we had a good view of a pair of Sacred Kingfishers, which may have been raising young because they seemed to be carrying small prey. A couple of Swamp Wallabies, an Echidna and an unidentified snake (our chief snake finder being more intent on running away than on identification) rounded out the wildlife sightings.

After lunch we transferred to the McClelland Road end of the Reserve and after an unsuccessful search for Elbow Orchids we were able to add Mistletoebird, Dusky Woodswallow and Goldfinch to the tally, together with a Pelican circling overhead. A Jacky Lizard rounded out the fauna sightings. Unfortunately, a cat was also seen.

A final tally of 34 birds, five species of orchid, two species of mammal (not counting the cat) and two reptiles made for a satisfactory day's outing. Butterflies included many

Common Browns, Meadow Argus, Australian Painted Lady, Varied Sword-grass Brown and small Grass Blues.



Varied Sword-grass Brown. Photo: Lee Denis

The Reserve has an active Friends group\*, led by Leon Costermans, which carries out mostly woody weed removal. On Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> December the group held its end of year break up, with a lunch followed by a tour of some selected areas of the Reserve led by Leon. Parks Victoria Ranger Alison gave us an update on future plans for the Reserve, including follow-up vegetation work after the prescribed burn, plans for fauna surveys, and issues around conservation of heritage values associated with the Reserve's long history as an army camp, internment camp and hospital, later a recreation reserve and finally a Flora and Fauna Reserve.

The area's use as an army training ground dates from the 1880s – troops trained there before being shipped to the

Boer War. (Aldershot Road, on the northern side, relates to the Aldershot army training ground in England). It held an internment camp for enemy aliens during the First World War, and later a venereal diseases hospital. After WW1 the Reserve was intermittently used by the army, and also by Sir Keith Murdoch to graze his sheep from nearby Cruden Farm. It was used by the Army Reserve up until the 1970s, with sections also used as a recreational area – a cricket pitch still remains under the bush.

The army finally departed in 1980 and the Flora and Fauna Reserve declared in 1985. The Friends group was established shortly after – last year it celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Leon Costermans has led the group throughout. The Owen Dawson Walk in the Reserve is named after a former president of our club, who is spoken of as a walking encyclopaedia of natural history – an article about Owen's Bees appeared in the June 2014 edition of the newsletter.

[Most of the above historical information is taken from *Australian Aldershot* by Winty Calder].

Several structures remain in the Reserve from its army use, including an old fountain and the reservoir. Some of the bumps and hollows are also due to army training in trenching, and creation of firing ranges.

One of the heritage features of the Reserve is the plantation of mostly Mahogany Gum (*Eucalyptus botryoides*) behind the McClelland Drive car park – some large Cypress trees and quite a few different non-indigenous Acacia species are also found there. The Mahoganies present a problem since they hybridise with other Eucalyptus species, with their pollen being widely distributed – Leon pointed out a large tree in the Reserve which is a hybrid between *E. botryoides* and the indigenous *E. cephalocarpa* (Silver-leaved Stringybark). Tests have shown that this tree produces viable seed, and it is surrounded by saplings that look to also be hybrids.



Swamp Wallaby. Photo: Lee Denis

The reserve contains a wide range of plant species. In Spring the Wedding Bush (*Ricinocarpus pinifolius*) is in profuse flower, while in the firebreaks a sea of Purple Flag (*Pattersonia occidentalis*) and Native Parsnip (*Trachymene composita*) borders the reserve. These latter are unfortunately mistaken for weeds by some people and pulled up – the rangers have installed sign boards explaining that this is indeed an indigenous species. Local naturalist and photographer Rudie Kuiter has documented some 90 species of orchid, including Duck Orchids (*Caleana* spp), several species of Sun Orchid (*Thelymitra* spp), several species of *Caladenia* (Spider and Mantis Orchids), Bird Orchids (*Chiloglottis* spp), and also *Diuris* spp.

During our walk with Leon we spotted many Hyacinth Orchids, and this time we also found the Elbow Orchids (*Arthrochilus huntianus*).



Elbow Orchid. Photo: Lee Denis

Over 70 bird species have been recorded, from year-round residents like at least ten species of honeyeaters and Golden Whistlers, to summer residents and visitors like Dusky Woodswallow, Rufous Whistler, Sacred Kingfisher and Satin Flycatcher. Rare sightings include Rufous Fantail, White-necked Heron and White-winged Triller. There have been reports of Powerful Owl and Pink Robin. A

population of Red-browed Finches can sometimes be sighted, together with both Common and Brush Bronzewing. Shining Bronze-cuckoo and Fan-tailed Cuckoo are also seen. Raptors include Sparrow-hawk



White-winged Triller.  
Photo: Lee Denis

(breeding), Black-shouldered Kite, Little Eagle, Swamp Harrier and, occasionally, Wedge-tailed Eagle overhead.

The Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve is an invaluable asset for Frankston, and is well used by birdwatchers, orchid specialists and by people simply taking a quiet break

for a stroll in the bush. It is to be hoped that it remains so for the future- **Lee Denis**

\* Friends of Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve meet on the first Sunday of each month, resuming in February 2015.

#### Bird List For Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve 1 December 2014

Australian Pelican	Laughing Kookaburra	Little Wattlebird	Golden Whistler	Grey Butcherbird
Australian White Ibis	Sacred Kingfisher	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Rufous Whistler	Australian Magpie
Straw-necked Ibis	Superb Fairy-wren	White-eared Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush	Pied Currawong
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Spotted Pardalote	White-naped Honeyeater	Satin Flycatcher	European Goldfinch
Common Bronzewing	White-browed Scrubwren	New Holland Honeyeater	Grey Fantail	Mistletoebird
Rainbow Lorikeet	Brown Thornbill	Eastern Spinebill	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	Common Blackbird
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Red Wattlebird	Eastern Yellow Robin	Dusky Woodswallow	

\*\*\*\*\*

---

#### Peninsula Field Naturalists Club Inc

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month with a field trip the following Saturday. Further information and current Programme of Activities can be found at our website.

President:  
Mrs Pat Gomm

All correspondence to  
Secretary  
Mrs Judy Smart

Annual Subs due July  
Adult \$20  
Concession \$15

Treasurer:  
Ms Linda Edwards

Newsletter edited by Lee Denis